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**BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH TURKMENISTAN HIGHLY REGARDED BY IRAN: ZARIF**

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28.01.2019

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Mehr News Agency (28 January 2019)

Mohammad Javad Zarif, Iran's Foreign Minister, held a meeting with visiting Turkmen Deputy Foreign Minister Wafa Khadzhev in Tehran on Sunday.

In the meeting, Zarif stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to its relations with Turkmenistan and considers the Central Asian neighbour as one of the closest countries to it, adding we always want to expand relations and cooperation with Turkmenistan in various fields, and we hope that we can use all the existing potentials to expand friendships and brotherhood.

Referring to the agreements on the Caspian Sea regime, the Iranian top diplomat declared Iran's readiness to implement joint projects in the Caspian Sea.

Expressing hope that the joint commission meeting would be held in the near future, Zarif said that no issue should affect the existing friendship.

Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, in turn, underlined the importance of his country's relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran and pointed to his earlier meeting with his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi, saying "we are trying to remove the obstacles to further expand and strengthen bilateral cooperation and relations between the two countries.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and his Turkmen counterpart Wafa Khadzhev held a new round of political consultations between the two countries in Tehran on Saturday, according to the official website of Iranian Foreign Ministry.

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